



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM CHILD PROFILE
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September 15, 2006

BENCHMARKING- OCTOBER 2006

Dear Immunization Provider –

It's time for immunization benchmarking again. As part of your provider agreement with the Department of Health to receive childhood vaccines, all health care providers are required to participate in an annual one-month survey of every child who receives state-supplied vaccine. This year, benchmarking takes place during the month of October.

Last year, a new format was introduced. Each provider practice was given Benchmarking Log sheets to record specific information every time state-supplied vaccine was given to a child less than 19yrs old. This method is continued for 2006. However, there is one additional question on the Log sheet for 2006: "Is this child receiving flu vaccine today?" Y (yes) or N (no).

A small supply of Benchmarking Log sheets is included in this mailing. Please save one sheet to use in case you need to make more copies. Helpful hints for completing the Logs are printed on the back of each sheet. Also, an explanation sheet is provided with this letter to share with your parents/patients and/or staff in case they have questions.

Please mail your completed Log sheets together using the enclosed self-addressed postage-paid return envelope(s) or you can fax the sheets to 360-236-2258. The completed Log sheets are due November 15, 2006.

Using CHILD Profile Immunization Registry for Benchmarking:

You may use the Immunization Registry in place of the Log Sheets **if** you use the system for **all** children (under 19) vaccinated during October. Besides the usual recording of vaccines administered (including flu vaccine), you will also need to select the appropriate VFC Eligibility category for each child in the VFC Status field on the Patient Demographics screen. If you choose to follow these steps, the Department of Health will receive your Benchmarking report automatically, without any additional action by you. You will not need to submit the Log sheets or any other paper reports to the Department. All data must be entered into the Registry by November 15, 2006. A sample screen from CHILD Profile is included. For specific Immunization Registry questions, please call the CHILD Profile Help Desk at 206-205-4141 or 1-800-325-5599.

ABOUT THE VFC PROGRAM & BENCHMARKING

The VFC Program

The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program is a federal entitlement program funded by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare (CMS) and administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Immunization Program (NIP). VFC provides vaccines for children under age 19 who are Medicaid enrolled, uninsured, underinsured, or American Indian/Alaskan Native. The CDC requires benchmarking to ensure continued federal VFC funding for the State DOH Immunization Program. The VFC program is only one funding source for the Washington State-supplied vaccine program.

Information for Staff and Parents/Clients

- Participating in benchmarking activity, a condition of each provider office's agreement with the Department of Health to receive State-supplied vaccine, enables the state to document the percentage of children eligible for federal funding of vaccine under the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program.
- All provider offices receiving state-supplied vaccine must participate in this benchmarking activity. This includes all public and private facilities, i.e., private offices, clinics or organizations; federally qualified, community, migrant, rural, or tribal health centers; local health department clinics; hospitals; schools; juvenile facilities; etc.
- The CDC's NIP requires the state to provide actual data to document the percentage of children eligible to receive vaccine provided by the VFC Program. The amount of VFC-funded vaccine received is directly linked to the number of children meeting VFC eligibility.
- Benchmarking information must be collected for every child vaccinated at any clinic or provider site receiving state-supplied vaccine during October 2006. Although parents/clients self-report their eligibility category, and providers are not required to validate client status, it is important to document the VFC categories accurately.
- It is extremely important to understand the underinsured category in order to assist your clients in answering the screening questions as appropriately as possible. The VFC eligibility categories of no insurance, American Indian/Alaskan Native, or Medicaid are easily understood by the client. However, a more detailed understanding of the underinsured definition is needed for clients to determine if this category applies to them. Using the definition and examples listed on the back of the Benchmarking Log Sheet should help when determining the underinsured category.

Documentation of eligibility and their trends over time will assist the state immunization program to monitor and validate the appropriate use of federal and state funds that are used to purchase vaccines.

We appreciate your assistance in making this activity a success. If you have questions about the VFC Program or the Benchmarking process, please contact Katherine Harris-Wollburg at 360-236-3513 or katherine.harris-wollburg@doh.wa.gov.